

concentration of Germans on the left bank of the Vistula obliged the Russians to retire on a line of defense which runs in great danger, as the strong Russian rearguard is fighting desperately to hold the Germans until reinforcements can be brought up, and they can oppose at least equal numbers to the masses of Germans.

Apparently the Germans have concentrated 750,000 men in the area northwest of Warsaw and moved so rapidly that they forced the withdrawal of a Russian force of probably 300,000. The Russian army is playing a desperate game of bluff. Petrograd asserts that within two or three days the Russians will be able to renew the offensive, and that if Von Hindenburg cannot reach Warsaw in that short period he will have lost his last chance. The situation is summarized by the Army Messenger as follows:

"Persistent attacks by great masses of German troops have compelled a reorganizing of our army west of Warsaw. The enemy is suffering heavy losses in his offensive against the Kazanowski-Torsh-Skiernewice front, where our artillery is repulsing his massed attacks."

Kazanowski-Torsh-Skiernewice, sixteen miles northwest of Warsaw, Torsh is twenty miles west of Warsaw and Skiernewice is thirty-nine miles southwest of the Polish capital, so that the German line runs in a reverse curve, with the great fort of Novo Georgievsk defending Warsaw from an attack at the northwest and is across the Vistula at Kazanowski.

The events of the past few days have clouded the situation in southwest Poland, in front of Cracow. An official report issued in Vienna states that the Russians have begun a general retreat in Galicia and were defeated in a battle at Limanow, which is on the Sander Pass, in the Carpathians. The new offensive claimed by the Austrians is reported to be the result of the arrival from the Carpathians of troops that had served in great numbers in the Russian army.

This report is contradicted by unofficial news from Petrograd, which says that the Austrians who attempted to swim down the Carpathian slopes were intercepted and defeated by the Russians, who were prepared for the move and had distributed troops in the narrow valleys. In this area, as in Poland, the Russians are clearing up the situation and to determine whether or not the Russians have been compelled to raise the siege of Cracow and to withdraw once more to eastern Galicia.

In Petrograd, Emperor Nicholas, returning from Trans-Caucasia, summoned the Imperial Council to meet him at the Tsarskoe-Selo Palace. The session lasted two hours. At its conclusion, Emperor Nicholas, accompanied by the Empress, returned to the city.

### RUSSIAN AVALANCHE.

Gathering Great Force to Sweep Germans From Poland.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun. LONDON, Dec. 18.—The Daily Mail correspondent in Petrograd telegraphs: "The Russian army is gathering a great force in Poland in a steady flow. The issue of the fighting between the Vistula and the Bzura rivers, west of Warsaw, has depended for the last few days on the question of which could bring the larger weight of numbers into the line."

"The military journal, *Russky Invalid*, speaks reassuringly and with special knowledge. It says: 'Our forces are increasing not merely day by day but hour by hour. Soon our avalanche of troops will begin to sweep the enemy back to the frontiers and as much further as they be necessary.'

Already the pursuit of the army routed near Miava has carried the Russian advance across the frontier, where it has rounded up large numbers of stragglers and captured guns and transports."

### GERMANS QUIT LODZ?

Report That Town Wouldn't Serve as Base of Operations.

By Central News. PETROGRAD, Dec. 18.—A newspaper here quotes a high authority as stating that the Germans have evacuated Lodz, having found that the town would not serve as a base of operations.

It is believed the German plan to capture the right bank of the Vistula and then advance from Miava and exert pressure on the left bank has completely failed.

### CRACOW IS THE PIVOT.

Germans' Main Effort Is to Prevent Silesian Invasion.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun. LONDON, Dec. 18.—The Times correspondent at Petrograd, telegraphing under Friday's date, says:

"We are unable to follow the events which are now developing in the northern Carpathian valleys. All we can say is that there is the greatest animation in Lemberg and among the Russian troops in Galicia at the prospect of finally crushing the foe. Nor is definite information forthcoming yet regarding the new point of attack of Von Hindenburg's invasion of Poland. The fruitlessness of the efforts to break through the Russian lines on the Bzura must have suggested to him the advisability of action elsewhere, probably further south and presumably in the region of Wielun. Whether the attack will come from this point will be directed against Warsaw or Kielce must be a matter of speculation."

"In appraising the strategic merits of the enemy's move, the Russian front, it should be remembered that the real objective is not the possession of Warsaw or the relief of Przemyśl but the prevention of a Russian invasion of Silesia. This explains the intensity of the German high command and its apparent inability to stick to a consecutive plan of operations. All Russian and Allied plans are well served by this; the enemy comes out to be destroyed instead of waiting in the trenches."

"But all efforts can only serve of the day of reckoning. The Russian armies are within a stone's throw of the Silesian border north of Cracow, which is the pivot about which all operations at present are developing. The desperate flanking moves on the Bzura and from the Carpathians only serve to indicate that the Russians hold the pivot point, which in round terms it will sweep the flanking columns off the road and advance into the heart of Germany."

### VICTORY QUESTIONED.

"Vorwärts" of Berlin Doesn't Think Russians Are Crushed.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun. LONDON, Dec. 18.—While all the news from Poland does not make clear the object of the Russian advance, it is clear that nothing from German sources even to show upon what round some triumphant demonstrations are being held in Berlin. A great Russian defeat is alleged and the organ of the official states that the Russians are everywhere in retreat, but does not specify what tangible results have been gained.

"Vorwärts" is the solitary exception to the chorus of triumph made up by the German press. It says:

"To speak of an annihilating defeat of the Russians is a ridiculous and misleading exaggeration. A huge army cannot be destroyed in these days of gigantic battles on an enormous front."

### LODZ OF LITTLE VALUE.

Germans Put Attention on Line From Suchowzow to Vistula.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun. LONDON, Dec. 18.—The Petrograd correspondent of the *Daily News* telegraphs to-night the following:

"Prince Scherbatoff, director of the imperial stud, who has returned from a visit to East Prussia, states that the Russians have advanced deeply into that province and that the entire population has fled to the interior of Germany."

## Austrians Storm Petrokow, Says Official Statement

Vienna Asserts Russians Were Routed on the Bzura and North of the Carpathians and Their Main Resistance Broken.

### RUSSIANS IN RETREAT ON 250 MILE FRONT

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun. AMSTERDAM, Dec. 18.—The following official statement was given out today in Vienna:

The Russian main forces were defeated and are being pursued along the entire battlefield of 250 miles from the Bzura to the south of the River Bzura.

Yesterday the enemy was driven from positions north of the Carpathians, between Krasna and Zabielice. On the lower Dunajec we and our ally's forces are contending with the enemy's rearguard.

In South Poland our advance has been made with important fighting. Petrokow was stormed the day before yesterday, and Przedsborz yesterday.

The situation in the Carpathians is not yet substantially changed. An earlier official statement given out in Vienna was as follows:

The latest news permits of no further doubt that the resistance of the Russian main force has been shattered. After the defeat of the southern wing in the battle of Limanow, which lasted several days, our allies also gained a victory near Lodz.

The Russians are now completely routed on the River Bzura. Threatened by our advance across the Carpathians from the south, the enemy began a general retreat, which they are trying to cover by stubborn fighting in the regions before the Carpathians.

Our troops are attacking on the line of Grodno-Zakliczew. Along the other parts of the front the pursuit has begun.

### PURSUIT VIGOROUS.

Berlin Reports Progress in Following Up Russians.

BERLIN, via London, Dec. 18.—The pursuit of the Russians in Poland is being continued vigorously, according to an announcement by the General Staff today. The statement says that the Allies have been repulsed in Flanders. It follows:

"The fighting in Niepois continues favorably, but no decision yet has been reached."

The French attacks between La Hassee and Arras and on both sides of the River Somme have resulted in failure, with severe losses to the enemy. On the Somme the French lost 1,200 men in prisoners and at least 1,500 in dead; our own losses were under 200.

In the Argonne forest our successful attacks resulted in the capture of some 750 prisoners in addition to war material. There have been no

province and that the entire population has fled to the interior of Germany."

"The Germans are attempting a new and rapid move by crowding their flank between Suchowzow and the Vistula. They evacuated Lodz and brought a great part of their army into this region. Neither army now sets any value on Lodz."

Three hundred and fifty thousand Germans are now in the region of Suchowzow. Marshal von Hindenburg is still driving his men through flow to the left bank of the Vistula.

Unceasing and violent attacks are being made on the Russian lines along the Bzura because the great frosts are near and it will be impossible for the Germans to use the Vistula from Thorn for purposes of transport. Very soon the Russian, who are masters of the north bank of the Vistula to East Prussia, will be able to use the frozen river for all military operations."

### FRENCH FINANCES STRONG.

Nation Has Resources to Continue War to End, Says M. Ribot.

PARIS, Dec. 18.—In explaining the budget for 1915 to the Appropriations Committee of the Chamber of Deputies today, M. Ribot, Minister of Finance, said that the financial position of France was strong and that the nation would not lack resources to continue the war to the end without faltering.

When the war began, he said, the French Treasury had not taken any precautions to enable it adequately to meet the expenses involved. He pointed to this as one of the proofs that France did not want war and that hostilities were thrust upon her.

The Minister said that he considered the reestablishment of credit, temporarily embarrassed by the war, as the most pressing need, and that this intricate system of commercial and industrial credit was now recovering.

M. Ribot told the Appropriations Committee that the Government had advanced to allied or friendly countries these amounts: To Belgium, 250,000,000 francs (\$500,000,000); to Serbia, 50,000,000 francs (\$100,000,000); to Greece, 20,000,000 francs (\$40,000,000); to the Bank of Montenegro, 50,000,000 francs (\$100,000,000).

The Treasury had in circulation on September 1, 1914, 427,000,000 francs (\$854,000,000) of Treasury bonds. This was increased before the end of the year to 500,000,000 francs (\$1,000,000,000). The total National Defense tax subscribed for now surpasses 1,000,000,000 francs (\$2,000,000,000).

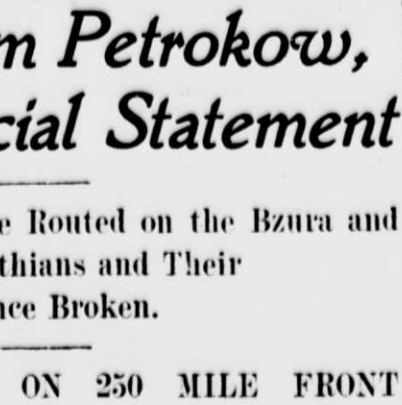
The Finance Minister explained that the Bank of France, under the law of November 11, 1914, advanced to the Government for mobilization expenses 2,000,000,000 francs (\$4,000,000,000) and the Bank of Algeria 100,000,000 francs (\$200,000,000). This proved insufficient for the first expenses of the campaign, and the Government called upon the bank in September to increase its advances to an ultimate total of 6,000,000,000 francs (\$12,000,000,000). M. Ribot requested the Appropriations Committee to recommend that Parliament sanction this agreement with the Bank of France, which was dated October 21.

### Big Loan For Paris.

PARIS, Dec. 18.—The City Council of Paris has authorized an issue of 140,000,000 francs (\$280,000,000) in 5% percent, one year debentures, free from all taxes and charges. The Government has agreed to subscribe for 45,000,000 francs (\$90,000,000) of the loan.

### CAPT. HENRY L. BRUCE KILLED.

LONDON, Dec. 18.—The Hon. Henry Lyndhurst Bruce, who married Camille Clifford, an American actress, has been killed in action according to French list of officers killed. He was a Captain in the Scots Guards. Capt. Bruce was the eldest son of Lord Aberdare. He met Camille Clifford in 1906, while she was playing in an American musical production in London, and married her.



Share your Christmas cheer with the children of the poor. The Children's Aid Society asks for contributions to make a happy Christmas for the thousands under its charge.

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### HALF OF AUSTRIAN ARMY LOST IN SERBIA

Letter From Budapest Says Defeat Has Aroused Nation.

HUNGARY MAY ACT ALONE

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun. LONDON, Dec. 18.—The Morning Post prints another Hungarian letter dated December 12 confirming the Austro-Hungarian debacle in Serbia. The letter says:

"The army is now practically nonexistent. The losses in killed and wounded in the rear guard actions and flight were more than 60,000, and in the shattered remnants of Hungary are now mounting guns in Seman. Several hundred Hungarians are now mounting guns in Seman. Several hundred Hungarians are now mounting guns in Seman."

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